1: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 SH5.Tehuelche SH5

hockey (no doubt, *Araucanian*). The *Tehuelche* did a great deal of recreational swimming and diving, at which they were very proficient. They, even the women, were greatly addicted to gambling at horse-racing, dice, and cards.

Music and musical instruments.—Songs were without words. The early *Tehuelche* used a bark rattle hung to the girdle when dancing (Fletcher, 1854, p. 50); the later people used a rattle of dried bladder or hide, a skin-covered drum, the musical bow (fig. 18, *A*), and (Musters, 1871, p. 77) a flute of guanaco thighbone (probably the long bone used with the musical bow). The bull-roarer and trumpet were absent. (For details on *Tehuelche* musical bow and songs, see Lehmann-Nitsche, 1908 *a*, and Fischer, 1908.)

Tobacco and alcoholic beverages.—Gambling, smoking, and alcoholic beverages were absent from early *Tehuelche* culture, before the 18th century, but later were passionately indulged in (fig. 18, *I*). A favorite procedure among smokers was to lie prone on the ground and to swallow the smoke in order to produce temporary intoxication. (Carteret, 1770, p. 23; Coan, 1880, p. 216; details in Bourne, 1833, pp. 94–95.) Many *Tehuelche* in Musters' time did not smoke or drink at all (Musters, 1872, p. 199); some did not smoke in Prichard's time (1902, p. 101). Tobacco was commonly mixed with calafate (*Berberis* sp.) wood shavings for smoking (Prichard, 1902, p. 100).

Recent *Tehuelche* held an eating and drinking feast, called malón, with dancing, during which they sang and struck their mouths rhythmically with the palms of their hands to break the song, and often with bloody fighting before the feast closed (Borgatello, 1904, pp. 26–32).

RELIGION

Our information on *Tehuelche* religion is extremely meager, superficial, and vague. Great confusion, not to say contradiction, reigns, as a result partly of cultural mixture in the Patagonian and especially Pampean region, partly of failure on the part of some otherwise excellent first-hand observers to distinguish exactly between tribe and tribe.

From out of the welter there seems to emerge pretty clearly the conclusion that the *Tehuelche* believed in a Supreme Being, looked upon as in general benevolent and good, but rather aloof and otiose. (See esp. Viedma, 1837 *b*, pp. 75, 79; Musters, 1871, p. 179; 1873, p. 222; Borgatello, 1904, p. 32.) Whether he was the Maker or moral law-giver is not clear, nor have we evidence of any cult, at least in the way of public rites. The more commonly occurring names by which he was known, although some of these may not be *Tehuelche*, are: Guayava-cunnee (*Tehuelhet*, Falkner, 1774, p. 114, "lord of the dead"); Soycha (*Tehuelhet* and *Diuihet*, Ibid.; *Patagon*, Dobrizhoffer,

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Puelche SE 10

T 771 **Religion.**—Of *Poya* religion we are merely told that there was a belief in a superior being called Chahuelli or Chachuelli (Olivares, 1874, pp. 511, 514, 516, 519), who could do good or evil to people. Olivares compares him (and/or it) to the *Araucanian huecubu* (1874, T p. 511).

757 **Curing.**—Bloodletting was medicinally practiced.

PUELCHE CULTURE

Pu 114 The bulk of our information on *Puelche* culture is derived from Sánchez Labrador (1936), Falkner (1774), and D'Orbigny (1835–42, 4: 221–222, and esp. 2: 266–272). If and how far the description by Ovalle (1888, pp. 178–179) of "*Pampa*" culture refers to the *Puelche* is doubtful. Very frequently Sánchez Labrador and Falkner, especially the latter, give rather detailed cultural data for tribes of the Pampa and vicinity in general, without specifying any particular tribe, *Puelche* or other. D'Orbigny clearly distinguishes between *Puelche* and others, but gives few details on *Puelchean* culture, dismissing, for instance, practically the whole of material and social culture with the statement that *Puelche* culture was in these phases like *Tehuelche* and Argentine *Araucanian*. In the following account we shall confine ourselves to those data that can clearly or with reasonable probability be assigned to the *Puelche* as such—not an easy task, since by D'Orbigny's time and even Sánchez Labrador's and Falkner's time great acculturation with *Araucanian* and *Tehuelche* culture had taken place.

Pu 197 If Lehmann-Nitsche's theory of a fourth Pampean language, the *Het* family, spoken, he believed, by Falkner's *Cherkehet* of the southern Buenos Aires Province region, and by some of the *Diuihet*, should turn out to be fully validated, then it would be imperative to draw a distinction between the culture of the *Het* peoples and that of the *Puelche*. Lehmann-Nitsche, for example, considered that gualichu, the name for the evil spirit(s), was of *Het* provenance. At present, however, even though we accept the *Het* hypothesis, there is very little of Pampean culture that can be assigned specifically to the *Cherkehet* or *Het*-speaking peoples. In the following summary of *Puelche* culture, only at a point here and there will the possibility be considered that a given cultural trait assigned to the *Puelche* may actually have been *Het* instead. This approach is not all that might be desired, but appears to be the most satisfactory one under present limitations of space and knowledge.

Pu 101 Scattered through the early Chilean sources, such as Rosales and the *Proceso Criminal de 1606*, are certain sparse data on the culture of the nomadic hunting peoples living at the time in Pampean territory, often called in these sources by the generic geographic name of

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

them never to mention the name of, and to avoid all allusion to, the deceased, their idea being that the dead should be utterly forgotten, though they will add a stone in passing to the cairn of a distinguished chief or hero. The death of a child is marked by a display of sincere grief on the part of the parents. The horse it has been accustomed to travel on during the march is brought up, the gear placed on it, even to the cradle, and the horse, thus fully caparisoned, is strangled by means of laces, whereas in all other ceremonies where horses are killed they are knocked on the head with bolas. The saddle-gear, cradle, and all belonging to the child are burned, the women crying and singing. The parents moreover throw their own valuables into the fire to express their grief. These things some of the women who cry are allowed to snatch out, as a recompense for their services, but they seldom benefit much. On the occasion of the death of an only child of rich parents, fourteen horses and mares were slaughtered, in addition to the one it had been accustomed to travel on. Towards evening of the day of the event, previous to the burial of the corpse, a select party of old women marched in procession round and round the camp, crying and wailing. Gifts were also sent to the bereaved parents by the chiefs and relations, as a well-meant effort to divert their minds from dwelling on their loss.

The religion of the Tehuelches is distinguished from that of the Pampas and Araucanians by an absence of any trace of sun-worship, although the new moon is saluted, the respectful gesture being accompanied by some low muttered words which I never could manage to hear. They believe in a good and great Spirit, who according to the tradition related by Casimiro at the place, created the Indians and animals, and dispersed them from 'God's-hill,' as he explained the Indian name of the down (page 98). I am not at all certain that this was not a confused combination of the story of the Creation, as told by the missionaries, with his own ideas. There is a great tendency in the Indian mind

5: Bourne T-5 (1849)1874
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

Though their great size at first sight was fitted to inspire terror, it required no very long observation to discover that they were deficient in natural courage. This, in fact, might be inferred at once, from their habitual deceit, treachery and artifice, which are the defences of the weak and timorous, rather than the weapons of strong and daring natures. They always select the night to inflict injuries; never meet an enemy in open combat whom they can stab from behind, or despatch in the dark; and, when obliged to attack by day, always do so in large numbers. This defect of courage is increased by their superstition; they have great faith in charms, signs and omens, a weakness which I anticipated might exert great influence on my destiny in important conjunctures. Could I by any means so master their secret as to possess myself of its mystic power, it might prove an effective aid to my plans of self-defence, or of escape. Should it, on the other hand, be turned by any accidental causes against me, its impulse might prove irresistible by power or contrivance. There was no appearance of idolatrous worship among them, nor could I observe any allusion to a Supreme Being, or to any superior powers having personal attributes; and, except a single ceremony, of which more hereafter, the nature of which was and is still inexplicable, there was nothing that suggested to my mind the idea of religious worship. Whether they are cannibals or not, has been a matter of some dispute. So far as I know, they have been, heretofore, only casually observed on the beach by voyagers, or vaguely reported of by the people of adjoining countries and neighboring settlements; neither of which is a sufficiently reliable source of information. My own personal advantages on this head

5: Bourne T-5 (1849)1874
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last argument was decisive, and she kept her huge mouth closed for the night. There was a silent pause for some minutes, and, without another word, we ranged ourselves for repose. I thought the old heathen's conscience troubled him through the night; his sleep was broken, and he appeared very restless. Early the next morning he went to the lodge of the newly-married pair, and had a long chat with them. They thought him rather severe upon them at first; but, after a good deal of diplomacy, a better understanding was brought about. The young people could hardly get over a sense of the indignities they had received; but in the course of the day they returned, bag and baggage, to the old chief's tent, and made it their permanent abode.

We now moved in a westerly direction, and on the way succeeded in capturing a good deal of game. Their mode of dealing with the carcass of the guanaco is enough to dissipate whatever appetising qualities the meat — in itself very palatable — would otherwise possess. It was no uncommon circumstance, while the squaws were removing the hide, to see the dogs tugging at the other extremity, the women, meantime, crying out "Eh! Ah!" in a dissuasive, though not angry, tone. If the animals become too audacious, the ire of their mistresses is kindled, and they break out with "Casharan cashahy!" a phrase equivalent to that which, in English, directs its object to a region unmentionable in aure polite.

The Indians have, strictly speaking, no profane expressions. I never could learn that they worshipped or had any idea of a Supreme Being. The only observance which bore any aspect of religion was associated with something we

5: Bourne T-5 (1849)1874
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should little think of as an object of adoration — the tobacco-pipe; — though, how far this is, in fact, an object of idolatry in Christian lands, it might not become me to speculate. The only occasions on which the Indians discovered any appearance of devotion were those of smoking. This may have been only a symptom of intoxication, but the reader may judge for himself.

A group of a dozen or more assemble, — sometimes in a wigwam, sometimes in the open air. A vessel made of a piece of hide bent into a saucer-shape while green and afterwards hardened, or sometimes an ox-horn, filled with water, is set on the ground. A stone pipe is filled with the scrapings of a wood resembling yellow ebony, mixed with finely-cut tobacco. The company then lay themselves in a circle flat on their faces, their mantles drawn up to the tops of their heads. The pipe is lighted. One takes it into his mouth and inhales as much smoke as he can swallow; the others take it in succession, till all have become satisfied. By the time the second smoker is fully charged, the first begins a series of groanings and gruntings, with a slight trembling of the head, the smoke slowly oozing out at the nostrils. The groaning soon becomes general, and waxes louder, till it swells into a hideous howling, enough to frighten man or beast. The noise gradually dies away. They remain a short time in profound silence, and each imbibes a draught of water. Then succeeds another interval of silence, observed with the most profound and devotional gravity. All at length arise, and slowly disperse. Now, this may or may not have been a form of worship; but the circumstances attending it, the numbers uniformly engaged in it, the formality with which it was invariably conducted

The marriage ceremony, once the woman's price has been fixed and paid, is limited to the father's taking her to the groom's tent, unless she herself goes off to the groom unattended, a thing which is not at all reprehensible. The groom then has a mare or two slaughtered, according to his means, and invites the bride's and his own male and female relatives and friends to eat the meat which, once done, the marriage ceremony is over.

Both the men and the women are very loving and devoted to their children, whom, as soon as they are born, they bind about with many soft and pliable leather bands which they have in readiness. The babies are bound for over a month to a board made of many small sticks which are tied together and covered with hide. The Indians say that they grow up straight in this way, and the fact is that both the men and the women are all very straight and well built, and none are ever seen whose shoulders are hunched. Once the babies are taken out of their bindings the mothers usually carry them about with them on their backs, the baby's head issuing from the same opening in the garment as the mother's. When on the march they make a sort of cradle out of hide and sticks, rounded over and sealed on all sides except for openings for the head and feet, which they line and embellish with flannel, cloth or anything they may have, and ornament with beads, bells, etc., as they may be able to, and they secure them on the horse's rump behind the mother. Children are never seen to weep amongst these people, unless they receive a blow or fall.

Their religion is limited to a sort of belief in two powers, one benign, which has jurisdiction only over the heavens and is independent from and without power on the earth and its inhabitants, of whom they take little notice; the other power is both benign and stern, and governs the earth, directing, chastening and rewarding its inhabitants. This power they worship in any guise in which they may represent it, or in the shape of some object found on the beach washed up from a shipwreck, such as masks from a ship's prow or fashion pieces from the stern, these being the preferred representations for their worship since they suppose them to have appeared by enchantment. This deity is called the Cexalenque, which can be rendered as "powerful and valiant" [71]. Each person who has one of the figures defends it and believes that his is the true deity and those belonging to other Indians are false ones; yet disputes never flare up or get out of hand because they feel that the deity will itself bring down vengeance upon those who offend it. They believe that sickness and death are the god's retribution, unless they occur in old age, in which case they are attributed to natural causes. These images are kept in the tents, completely wrapped up in skins, woolen cloth, flannel or linen, as each is